

20 February 1987

JKW

LOGNOTE -- INTERNET Control Center Staff

(Briggs) INTERNET Technical Problems -- C/FED [redacted] and I visited Independent Hill on 10 February along with Helmo Raag, who has been in charge of Comsat's involvement with INTERNET, to discuss with OTI personnel at the ground station the recurring problems with the quality of INTERNET feeds from London (video/audio quality is fine on some days, but not very good on others). After a thorough review of OTI's daily logs of reception quality, it was fairly clearly established that the problems lie with the original sources -- primarily Moscow -- and not with the INTERNET system. Though Comsat saw some very minor issues they will be taking up with BTI, there were no indications that the present BT engineers strike is hampering our INTERNET relays. Moscow's switch of its 1530 GMT Vremya newscast on 11 January to a transponder with a weaker signal than previously was a particularly unfortunate development.

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In a conversation with C/ESG [redacted] from London on 13 February (in regard to INTERNET requirements for West Europe TV which he was discussing with BTI), he mentioned that he had watched the 1530 GMT Vremya cast as received by the BBC and said that the signal was very, very weak. Thus, we are dependent on the variable quality of the signals we receive from the originating source.

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At present, depending on reception, London switches between the "primary" 1530 gmt Vremya newscast and the "secondary" version, carried on a different transponder, for the hearing impaired. The latter, identical, cast is received with good reception, but the picture is dominated by a person replaying the news in sign language. In view of that, we prefer to take the "primary" cast if reception allows. Over the past week, reception of the "primary" program has generally been poor, with London switching most days to the "hearing impaired" version. Reception of Tripoli continues to be very good for the most part, and provided NESA analysts with footage of the executions carried out in Libya on 17 February.

(cc: D/FBIS; C/0ps; C/MOD; C/ESG; C/FED; CO/FBIS)